

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

By separate paper, Applicants are filing another certified copy of the priority document for this application. Applicants request favorable consideration of that document.

To place the application in better form, Applicant submits herewith a new abstract. No new matter has been added.

Claims 27-30 are presented for consideration in lieu of claims 1, 3, 4, 11-17 and 19, which have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for these claims can be found in the original application, as filed. By way of example, and not limitation, support for features recited in independent claims 27 and 29 can be found in the original disclosure as follows. For example, a command group may be considered to correspond to each of “sheet selections,” magnification/reduction,” “one side/both sides,” “sorter,” “density,” and “number of copies,” as discussed in paragraph [0033] of the published application. Also, the term “candidates” may be considered to correspond, for example, to “automatic,” “A4,” A4R”, and “A3,” corresponding to “sheet selection” as described in paragraph [0060] of the published application. Support for the selection unit may be considered to be found in paragraph [0049] with respect to FIG. 4, regarding “if ‘sheet selection’” is selected. A voice output unit may be considered to correspond to a voice synthesizing unit 105 and voice output unit 107. Operation of the determination unit may be considered to correspond to the discussion in paragraph [0061] of the published application. Support for the decision button may be found in original FIG. 5, and support for claim 28 may be found in paragraph [0050] of the published application. Of

course, the invention should not be considered to be limited by the discussion above.

Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the final Office Action mailed May 13, 2009.

The specification was objected to due to an informality. Specifically, the Examiner objected to the abstract. As discussed above, Applicants submit a new abstract with this response. Applicant submits that the new abstract overcomes this objection. Such favorable indication is requested.

Turning now to the art rejections, claims 1, 3, 4, 11, 12, 16, 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,026,156 to Epler et al. Claims 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Epler et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0250530 to Tanaka. Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Epler et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,243,682 to Eghesadi et al. Applicants submit that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention, as previously recited in these claims. Therefore, these rejections are respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, Applicants submit that independent claims 27 and 29, for example, as presented, amplify the distinctions between the present invention and the cited art.

In one aspect of the present invention, independent claim 27 recites an information processing apparatus for executing a predetermined procedure corresponding to a command designated by a user. The apparatus includes a database which holds plural candidates corresponding to plural commands, a selection unit which selects a command group, which includes some commands which relate, in response to the user operation, a decision button which

is operable by the user, a voice output unit which outputs each candidate as voice information from the candidates, which correspond to the commands included in the selected command group, one at a time, and a determination unit which determines a command designated by the user. When the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to one candidate that is output by the voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to that candidate as the designated command, and when the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to another candidate that is output by the voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to the other candidate as the designated command.

In another aspect of the present invention, independent claim 29 recites a method of controlling an information processing apparatus, which executes a predetermined procedure corresponding to a command designated by a user, and includes a database which holds plural candidates corresponding to plural commands, a decision button operable by the user, and a voice output unit that outputs a candidate as voice information. The method includes the steps of selecting a command group, which includes some commands which relate, in response to the user operation, outputting each candidate as the voice information from the candidates, which correspond to the commands included in the selected command group, one at a time, by the voice output unit, and determining a command designated by the user. When the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to one candidate that is output by the voice output unit, a command corresponding to that candidate is determined as the designated command, and when the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to another candidate that is output by the voice output unit, a command corresponding to the other candidate is determined as the designated command.

Thus, the present invention, as recited in independent claims 27 and 29, includes features such as (i) a voice output unit that outputs each candidate as voice information from candidates that correspond to commands included in a command group selected by a user, one at a time, (ii) when the user operates a decision during the voice information corresponding to one candidate that is output by the voice output unit, a command corresponding to that candidate as a command designated by the user is determined and (iii) when the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to another candidate that is output by the voice output, a command corresponding to the other candidate as a command designated by the user is determined. Thus, a predetermined procedure corresponding to the designated command is executed in an information processing apparatus. For example, if a command group “sheet selections” is selected by the user, the voice output unit outputs the voice information “automatic,” “A4,” “A4R,” and “A3,” and if the user operates the decision button during “A4R,” than “A4R” is outputted and a procedure for setting paper sheets used in a copy or print for A4R is executed. According to the present invention, therefore, the designated command is determined from a relationship between a voice information output and an operation of the decision button. Thus, if the decision button is operated when “A4R” is outputted, a command corresponding to “automatic,” “A4” or “A3” is not determined.

Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest such features of Applicants’ present invention, as recited in independent claims 27 and 29.

The Epler et al. patent teaches that each message is outputted as voice information from messages corresponding to a main menu or sub-menus and when a user touches one of keys corresponding to the number included in an output message, a command corresponding to the touched key is determined as a command designated by the user. In the device in the Epler et al.

patent, however, the designated command is determined from a key touched by the user. Thus, if the key that is touched when “A4R” is outputted, a command corresponding to “automatic,” “A4” or “A3” can be determined. In other words, the device in the Epler et al. patent does not determine a designated command from a relationship between a voice information output and a key operation, in the manner of Applicants’ present invention, as recited in independent claims 27 and 29. Applicants submit, therefore, that the Epler et al. patent does not teach or suggest many features of Applicants’ present invention, as recited in those independent claims.

Applicants further submit that the remaining art cited does not cure the deficiencies noted above with respect to the Epler et al. patent.

The Examiner relies on the Tanaka publication for teaching an input unit for a portable telephone in which a user can depress a plurality of buttons while positions of a plurality of fingers are fixed on the plurality of buttons, respectively. The Examiner relies on the Eghetesadi et al. patent for teaching an universal access photocopier in which an information processing apparatus is a copying machine. Applicants submit, however, that neither the Tanaka publication nor the Eghetesadi et al. patent teaches or suggests salient features of Applicants’ present invention, as recited in independent claims 27 and 29, which have been discussed above. Namely, those citations do not teach or suggest determining a designated command from a relationship between a voice information output and a key operation, in the manner Applicants’ present invention, as recited in those dependent claims. Applicants submit, therefore, that those citations add nothing to the teachings of the Epler et al. patent that would render obvious Applicants’ present invention, as recited in independent claims 27 and 29.


For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention, as recited in independent claims 27 and 29, is patentably defined over the cited art, whether that art is taken individually or in combination.

Dependent claims 28 and 30 also should be deemed allowable, in their own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Further individual consideration of these dependent claims is requested.

Applicants request favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early notice of allowance.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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